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# BETTER PLANTS

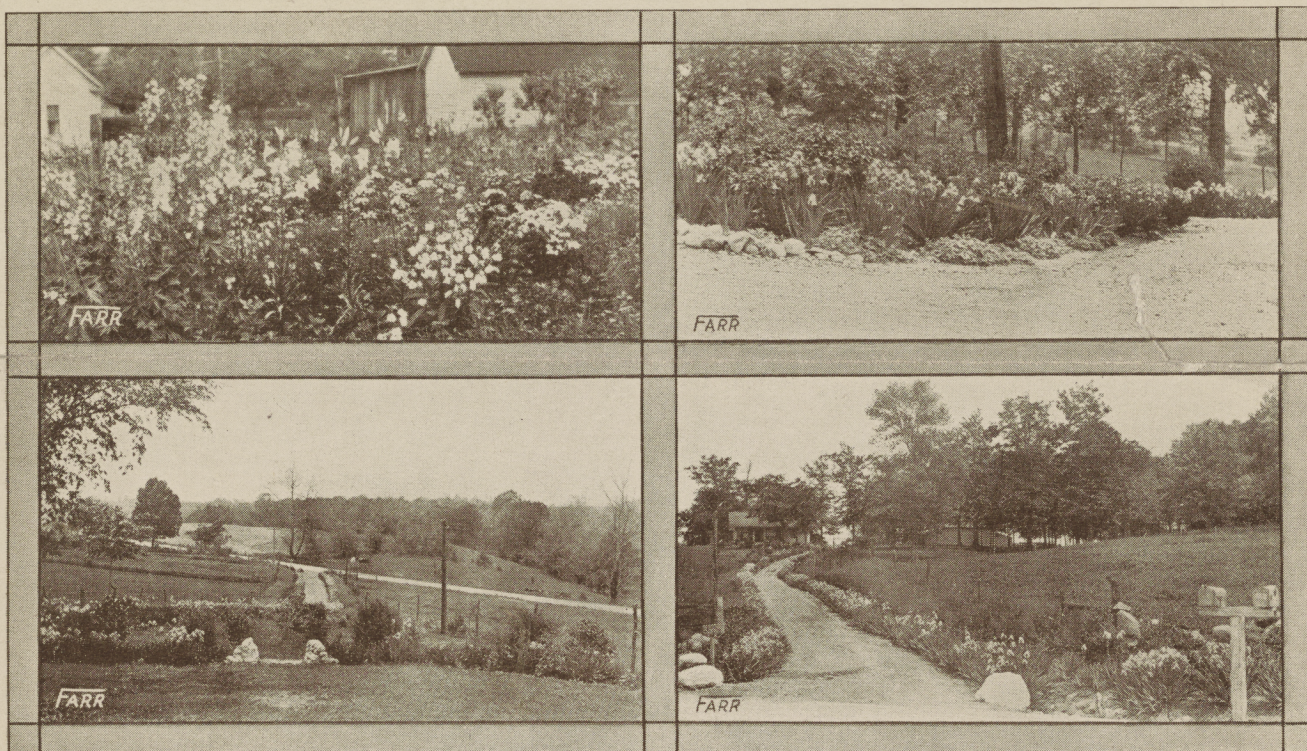
God's first gift to man was a Beautiful Garden



VOLUME III

APRIL, 1925

NUMBER 2



Four Pictures in Which Farr Plants Predominate. (For details, see page 4)

## Ten Perennials Not Commonly Known

In the recent February issue of *House and Garden*, we read with keen interest an article on "Ten Popular Perennials." The thought then occurred to us that an article on "TEN PERENNIALS NOT COMMONLY KNOWN" might be very helpful and interesting to BETTER PLANT readers.

Incidentally, the "Ten Popular Perennials" discussed in the *House and Garden* article were Iris, Peonies, Phlox, Chrysanthemums, Aquilegias, Hemerocallis, Delphiniums, Daffodils, Anemones and Poppies. We were gratified to note that every variety on this list is a Farr Specialty.

These are ten of the garden mainstays and yet no one would willingly limit the garden to this group. There are many another ten which represent popular perennials in American gardens. An English gardener particularly would throw up his hands in holy horror at the suggestion of using only ten, or even thirty, varieties of plants in a garden. Probably in no other country is there such a keen and common interest in plant novelties and in lesser known varieties as in England. We feel the growth of this interest in America. We believe that there are many American gardeners who would like to elaborate on

their garden schemes and collections, but hesitate to venture into new fields because of lack of information.

Here, then, is a list of ten perennials which are easily grown, thoroughly hardy, which produce splendid effect and results, and which are found in comparatively few gardens. These ten plants will add distinction to many American gardens, and give an entirely different aspect to almost every collection.

### **Dianthus deltoides**

Common name: Maiden Pink.  
History of species: A creeping member of the carnation family.

Bloom color: Rose-pink and crimson.  
Bloom season: May to June.  
Bloom use: Mass effect and color contrast.  
Ultimate height: 4 to 6 inches.  
Foliage: Good, remaining green at all seasons.

General use: Good for edges, border and bedding.

Soil required: Ordinary. Dry soil best.  
Culture required: Naturalizes itself.  
Weeding only.

How propagated: Divisions and cuttings.  
Characteristics: Creeping habit; forms dense mat. Very fragrant.

Comments: A very good plant for edging of stone walks, steps and low perennial borders. Indispensable in the rock-garden.

### **Eryngium amethystinum**

Common names: Sea Holly; Star Thistle.  
History of species: Native to Southern Alps. Not a member of the thistle family.

Bloom color: Amethyst blue.  
Bloom season: July to August.  
Bloom use: Cut flowers and garden color emphasis and contrast.

Ultimate height: 18 to 24 inches.  
Foliage: Glaucous green. Rigid stems. Stiff leaves.

General use: Naturalizing in hardy borders.  
Soil required: Ordinary soil but not too moist.

Culture required: None except weeding.  
How propagated: Seeds.  
Characteristics: Extremely hardy and prolific.

Comment: An odd plant with steel blue flowers. Resembles the thistle but more refined. Flowers can be cut and dried for winter bouquets. Good for subtropical effects.

### **Geranium nepalense**

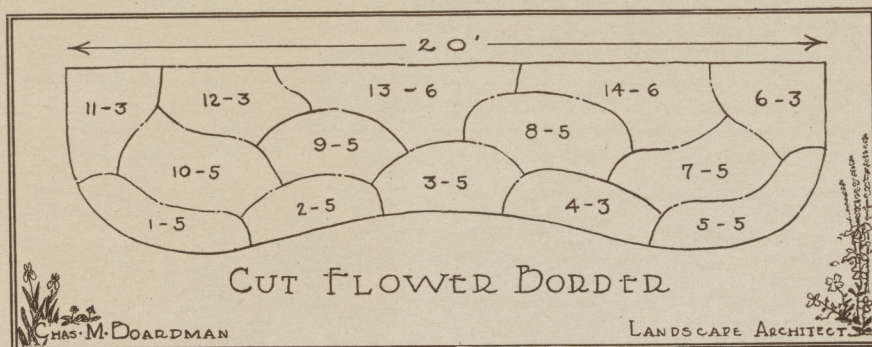
Common name: Cranesbill.  
History of species: Developed from American woodland inhabitant.

Bloom color: Deep pink.  
Bloom season: May to July.  
Bloom use: Cut flower and garden color.

Ultimate height: 1 to 2 feet.  
Foliage: Erect, branching, hairy green.

(Continued on page 2)



**Ten Perennials, continued**

General use: Garden borders and beds.  
Soil required: Ordinary, but not too moist.

Culture required: Naturalizes itself. Weeding only.

How propagated: Root divisions.  
Comment: Flowers five-petaled. Resembles the wild geranium but larger. A very delicate and refined associate to the popular annual.

**Hosta lancifolia**

Common name: Lance-leaved funkia; plantain lily.

History of species: Named after 18th century naturalist, Frank.

Bloom color: Lavender.

Bloom season: July and August.

Bloom use: Cut flower and border color.

Ultimate height: 18 to 24 inches.

Foliage: Long, narrow, green leaves in clumps.

General use: For borders and edging.

Soil required: Ordinary.

Culture required: Weeding only.

How propagated: Root divisions.

Characteristics: Splendid for shady places.

Comment: Flowers bell-shaped; fragrant. A fine perennial to combine with plantings of fern, evergreens and ground cover plants. An old favorite in grandmother's garden.

**Lysimachia punctata**

Common name: Loose-strife.

History of species: An old time garden plant. Native of Europe. Now wild, in New England.

Bloom color: Yellow.

Bloom season: June and July.

Bloom use: Mass effect and cutting.

Ultimate height: 1 to 2 feet.

Foliage: Coarse upright.

General use: For midsummer yellow in the garden.

Soil required: Dry soil.

Culture required: Weeding.

How propagated: Seeds and divisions.

Comment: In masses it produces solid sheets of golden yellow.

**Pentstemon digitalis**

Common name: Foxglove Pentstemon.

History of species: Native to Pennsylvania and Middle West.

Bloom color: White with purple spots.

Bloom season: June to July.

Bloom use: Cut flowers and garden beauty.

Ultimate height: 2 to 3 feet.

Foliage: Resembles small foxgloves in leaf and flower.

General use: Here and there in borders.

Soil required: Moist soil best.

Culture required: Weeding.

How propagated: Seeds.

Characteristics: A fair summer bloomer.

Comment: Effective along streams and pools.

**Salvia azurea**

Common name: Blue sage.

History of species: Native to Southern States.

Bloom color: Belladonna-blue. Showy spikes.

Bloom season: August to September.

Bloom use: Excellent for massing.

Ultimate height: 3 to 4 feet.

Foliage: Downy gray-green.

General use: Borders, masses, and back-grounds.

Soil required: Ordinary.

Culture required: Weeding only.

How propagated: Divisions and cuttings.

Characteristics: One of the few good fall blues.

Comment: One of the best blue perennials for contrast with pink phlox.

**Sempervivum**

Common name: House Leek; Hen and Chickens.

History of species: Named "Houseleek" because it grows wild on thatched roofs in Europe.

Bloom color: Shades of pink, red and yellow.

Bloom season: June and July.

Bloom use: Mass and contrast effect.

Ultimate height: 6 to 10 inches.

Foliage: Thick, glaucous and leathery.

General use: Rock gardens and wall and walk crevices.

Soil required: Dry ordinary.

Culture required: None.

How propagated: Offsets.

Characteristics: Exceptionally distinct and odd perennial.

Comment: Prefers sunny location. Creeping habit with upright flower stems. Harvard Botanical Gardens contain a beautiful display. No garden is complete without several colonies of these odd plants.

**Thalictrum flavum**

Common name: Meadow Rue.

History of species: Doubtful.

Bloom color: Yellow.

Bloom season: June and July.

Bloom use: Cut flower and mass effect.

Ultimate height: 3 to 4 feet.

Foliage: Good and decorative for cutting.

General use: Borders and naturalizing in front of shrubbery.

Soil required: Moist.

Culture required: None after establishment.

How propagated: Divisions and seed.

Characteristics: Pleasing foliage. Will do well in semi-shade.

Comment: A pleasing addition to any flower border.

**Tradescantia virginica**

Common name: Spider Lily.

History of species: Named after the gardener of Charles I of England.

Bloom color: Blue purple.

Bloom season: June to July.

Bloom use: Mass effect.

Ultimate height: 18 to 24 inches.

Foliage: Grass-like, resembling Siberian iris.

General use: Along streams, in borders and rockeries.

Soil required: Ordinary.

Culture required: None after establishment.

How propagated: Divisions.

Characteristics: Does well in semi-shade.

Comments: Foliage good all summer. Excellent companion to Hemerocallis. Unusual type of flower. Exceptionally prolific.

A small branch planted in water will root.

**PLANNING A YEAR-ROUND GARDEN****Here is a Correctly Designed Perennial and Cut-flower Border**

The plan above and list here presented have been prepared with the following points in mind:

1. To insure a proper arrangement according to ultimate height. Low plants in front, medium plants in the middle ground, and the tall sorts in the back-ground.

2. To produce a good contrast in flower and color scheme.

3. To provide bloom at different seasons—flowers from spring to fall frosts.

4. To include varieties which will produce suitable cut flowers for house decoration.

5. To be adapted for planting in a bed, along a wall or a fence, or in front of a shrub background.

6. To represent a correctly designed hardy plant border which will be within the means of every gardener on our mailing list.

Key	Quantity	Planting List	Cost
1	5	English Primrose (Primula hybrids)	\$1 10
2	5	Campion (Lychnis viscaria splendens)	1 10
3	5	German Iris (Iris Germanica)	75
4	5	Alum Root (Heuchera cascade)	1 10
5	5	Plantain lily (Hosta lancifolia)	1 10
6	3	Stone Crop (Sedum spectabile)	90
7	5	Shasta Daisy (Chrysanthemum maximum)	1 10
8	5	Ball of Snow (Achillea ptarmica)	1 10
9	5	Tickweed (Coreopsis lanceolata)	1 10
10	5	Blanket Flower (Gaillardia aristata)	1 10
11	3	Yellow Day Lily (Hemerocallis)	90
12	3	Larkspur (Delphinium)	90
13	6	Hardy Sunflowers (Helianthus)	1 32
14	6	Hardy Phlox	1 32

66 plants

Total.....\$14 89

**\$20 worth of plants and professional suggestions for \$12.50 Parcel Post Prepaid**

**Two collections, double quantities for \$23**

**How to Plant and Care for this Border**

In setting the plants, care should be exercised to see that the crowns are set about even with the surface of the ground. The plants do not require a great deal of attention, but it is advisable to have the ground between the plants well spaded once or twice a year; and, of course, to keep the areas free from weeds during the summer season. Late in the autumn a slight mulch, as a winter protection, is beneficial. Straw or leaves are usually better than a heavy application of stable manure, which sometimes has a tendency to rot the plants.



## BETTER PLANTS

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C. M. BOARDMAN, L.A., Landscape Dept.

Vol. 3

APRIL, 1925

No. 2

## TIMELY APRIL TOPICS

(By the Gardener of a Wyomissing Estate)

**Weeds.** We will not claim your attention for a botanical discussion about this class of garden plants. You are mostly concerned about prevention and removal.

**Prevention.** Weed prevention is dependent upon foresight and attention at the proper time. Cultivation, early and frequent, is, of course, the main essential. One minute of April weeding is worth an hour of back-breaking August labor. Keep the beds absolutely clean until June, and you will have little trouble for the balance of the year. Another preventive is the application of hydrated lime which sweetens the soil, and thus kills a large family of weed species. Use only the best seeds when planting. Cheap and unreliable seeds are weed containers. Also be careful about the fertilizers used, but remember that some weeds thrive simply because the soil is not fertilized. Cut and burn all seed-bearing weeds in fall, before the seeds ripen.

**Removal.** The amount of effort required to remove weeds is directly proportionate to the effort applied towards weed prevention. Practically all weeds can be removed by one or more of the following methods: (a) Hoeing, pulling and cultivating. (b) The application of hydrated lime at the rate of 3,000 pounds to the acre, or quicklime at the rate of a ton per acre. (c) The planting of a heavy cover, crop such as oats, alfalfa and soy beans in the infested area. (d) The planting of a crop which requires frequent cultivation in such areas. (e) For sorrel, dandelion and other lawn weeds, use iron sulphur (copperas) at the rate of two pounds to a gallon of water. An application in a fine mist spray each week for four weeks will be decidedly effective. Use brass or wooden containers and sprayers, since copperas corrodes metal. (f) For chickweed and quack grass, use six pounds of sodium arsenate to fifty gallons of water. In fact, one or both of these two chemicals are the principal base in weed killing solutions. It is difficult to explain in detail just how they should be used. We would suggest that you try them and experiment on a small scale first. Concentrate the solutions on the weeds and spray other plants as little as possible. Use a mist spray nozzle which covers only a small area, unless the tract to be treated does not contain other and more valuable plants. It is possible to apply chemical weed remover without injuring other plants, but as stated before, do your own experimenting on a small scale before treating the entire garden.

In summary, let us stress two rules: 1—Cultivate frequently and early. 2—Never let the weeds rest.

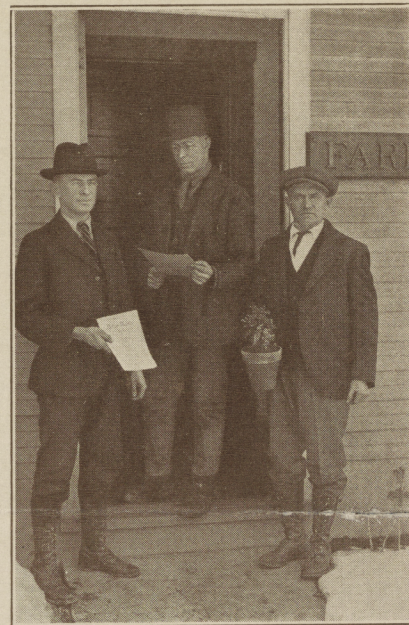
THREE REASONS WHY  
FARR PLANTS ARE GUARANTEED  
TRUE TO NAME

Up one row; down the next. Spade fork in one hand; basket and labels in the other. Notebook, catalog and pencils in their pockets. Eyes peeled for strays, mixtures and off colors.

From ten to sixteen years this procedure has been a part of the routine duties assigned to the Farr employees whose photographs appear in connection with this article.

From 1908 as apprentice boy in knee breeches to 1924 and advancement to Nursery Superintendent, is a concise and enlightening allusion to Mr. George Clouser. Mr. Clouser is, without doubt, one of the world's experts on peonies and iris. His sixteen years of association with Mr. Farr, his plant favorites and activities, and his extraordinary memory, have given him a ready knowledge of hybridizing and varieties. This knowledge, at his very fingertips, makes him sought after by enthusiasts at peony and iris shows and by everyone in our organization. Mr. Farr frequently remarked, "I depend on George for his memory of varieties more than on anyone else I know of, including myself." George is now 31 years of age and is the proud father of seven fine children. It keeps George hustling all around, but he thrives on it.

John Ravel is our peony and iris foreman "extraordinary." Johnny has been planting and digging Farr iris since 1913. The men say "when you want to know where peony Assmanshausen is located, the color of iris Pfauerauge, or how many



iris White Knight are in stock, ask Johnny." Of course, we keep a continuous stock tally of quantities and sales in the office, but Johnny's familiarity with quality, quantities and locations makes him invaluable for the control and efficiency of his digging gang. John lives on his own little farm where he grows strawberries, fancy poultry, truck and cut-

(Continued on page 4)

## Wanted—Garden Pictures

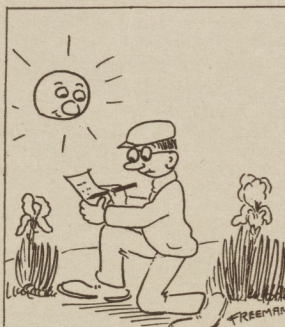
Right now we would particularly appreciate photos of Holland bulbs. Whether you intend to send us photos or not, let us remind you that a great deal of garden pleasure is derived from photographing your pet plants, and that April and May offer the most subjects for garden photography.

Here are a few suggestions if you are interested in preparing photos which can be used in BETTER PLANTS and, for which you are, therefore, entitled to premium of a \$2.50 iris, our selection.

1. Plants photographed for our use should be varieties which were obtained from us. Use the reverse side of print for your name and address, the varieties of plants and when planted. Other comments will be appreciated.

2. We cannot use general garden views unless the garden is well laid out in contrast. Individual or grouped plants in CLEAR FOCUS and sharp contrast are the most desirable. Do not send blurred and indistinct photos.

3. It is seldom that grown-ups appear to advantage in a garden picture. Children are the best subjects, if anything else besides plants are desired.



George Clouser selecting Iris Seedlings



Johnny Ravel truing Iris



"Perils of the Seed Picker" Sam Boltz needs a helpmate



U S Dept of Agriculture  
Bureau of Plant Industry  
230-14th St S W  
Washington D C

BETTER PLANTS—April, 1925  
A Magazine Devoted to the Hardy Garden

FOUR PICTURES OF FARR PLANTS  
(See page 1)  
(Top, left.) Delphiniums, Madonna Lilies, Sweet Williams, Canterbury Bells (Campanula).—Mrs. H. M. Hale, Willets, N. C.  
(Top, right.) Circle drive bed just south of house which has fifteen different kinds of Irises, including the ten varieties of the Rainbow cluster sent me almost two years ago from the Farr Nurseries. Taken May, 1924.  
(Bottom, left.) This is a view looking down from veranda, showing my old-fashioned Rose-garden below the lawn, and extends to where the drive begins to bend and goes up the hill. Have all kinds of old-fashioned hardy Roses which show up well on crest of hill and follow as the Irises have finished blooming.  
We started this country home six years ago, right in edge of the woods, and my old-fashioned flowers are my special care.  
(Bottom, right.) The entrance of my 400 feet of drive bordered by twenty varieties of Irises—a ribbon of yellow and lavender, hence the name "Iris Hill."  
Sold 50 dozen blossoms in two days from drive (first time we sold any) at Decoration Day time, as flowers were scarce and only the deep purple and white were out at that time. Have started shrubbery (Lilacs and Spiraea) back of Irises, along fence, to grow into hedge later.—Mrs. Geo. F. Gault, Iris Hill, Ind.

## BETTER PLANTS



MAKING BETTER PLANTS

This motor-driven Cultivator works close to the rows and eliminates hoeing. The depth is perfectly controlled and the machine will operate in wet ground many days before horse cultivators can be used.

### SPRING 1925 MOVING SALE

By the spring of 1926 the Farr Nursery will be completely moved to our new location on the State Highway. In the meantime, moving sales are being conducted on all such plants which are better sold at cut prices rather than transferred 12 miles distant at extra expense.

This is the last year for moving sales. Now is the time to stock up. At moving sale prices you can afford to establish mass plantings, and so make yours "a home in a garden instead of a home with a garden."

Mass plantings result in the effects of richness, substance and color contrast. Spotty and confused appearances are eliminated. Mass plantings are exceed-

ingly economical in proportion to the results obtained and the cost per plant is considerably lowered. Here is the list for spring mass planting.

#### Iris (Tall Bearded)

Amabilis. Rose-lilac and purple.  
Argus. Dark purple.  
Atrocærulea. Bluish violet.  
Attraction. Pale and deep blue.  
Berchta. Yellow and blue.  
Bridesmaid. White and lilac.  
Britannicus. Lavender and blue.  
Cameleon. Blue and violet.  
Clarissima. Lavender and white.  
Cottage Maid. Blue and white.  
Dandy. Yellow and purple.  
Frederick. Lavender.  
Gagus. Yellow and crimson.  
Gov. Hughes. Smoky violet.  
Hebe. White flushed blue.  
Khedive. Soft lavender.  
Marmora. Yellow-crimson lavender.  
Miralba. Lavender and white.  
Miss Eardley. Yellow and red.  
Monsieur du Sible. Lilac and purple.  
Mrs. G. Darwin. White and violet.  
Mrs. H. Darwin. White.  
Nationale. Shades of blue.  
Neglecta. Lavender and white.  
Nepalensis. Lavender-violet.  
Ophelia. White with blue.  
Purple King. Deep purple.  
Queen Emma. White.  
Regina. White.  
Salar Jung. Bronze and white.  
Standard Bearer. Rose-mauve.  
Teresita. Lavender and blue.  
Tineae. Blue and lilac.  
Violet Queen. Blue and black violet.  
Walneri. Lavender and purple.

#### Iris (Early Flowering)

Argus. Dark purple.  
Boquet Blanc. White and blue.  
Brunette. Yellow with olive.  
Dolphin. Large lilac and mauve.  
Fontarabie. Blue and purple.  
Freya. Pearl and violet.  
Gerda. Large yellow.  
Helge. Lemon-yellow.  
Nothung. Olive-yellow.  
Purple King. Purple.  
Queen Emma. White flushed blue.  
Violet Queen. Violet-purple.

#### Prices on Iris (including delivery)

Your Selection	P.P.	Express
100 Iris of one variety.....	\$6 00	\$6 30
50 Iris of one variety.....	3 30	3 50
25 Iris of one variety.....	2 20	2 30

#### Our Selection

100 Iris in 10 varieties.....	10 00	10 50
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#### Perennials for Mass Effect

Delphiniums, our selection.  
Hemerocallis (Day Lilies), our selection.  
Helianthus (Hairy Sunflower).  
Heliopsis (Orange Sunflower).  
Hardy Asters, our selection.

#### Parcel Post Express

100 our selection, named.....	\$10 00	\$10 50
50 our selection, named.....	5 50	5 75
25 our selection, named.....	3 00	3 15

#### English Primroses

Delightful and splendid border plants. Height 6 inches. Bloom April and May. Colors yellow, red, white, blue, purple and pink, in delicate combinations. Best in moist shady soil. Good for rock gardens. Price includes delivery.

#### Parcel Post Express

100 our selection.....	\$12 00	\$12 60
50 our selection.....	6 50	6 80
25 our selection.....	3 50	3 65

#### Three Reasons, concluded

flower gardens as a side line. He is 42, and he ought to know. He has three children and a savings club account for each of them.

Sam Boltz is our bachelor, but there are those who say he is engaged to either Bouncing Bet or Black-eyed Susan of the well-known Perennial family. Certainly, eleven years of association with Farr perennials from Achillea to Yucca, has filled any voids in this "woman hater's" life. Like Johnny, Sam knows the block letter and row number of his Anchusa myosotidiflora, the quantity of Aster St. Egwin, and the time to collect the seeds of Cheone Lyonii. Sam, with his pipe, basket, spade, and digging gang, resembles so many botanists or zoologists as they roam through the nursery collecting the plants to fill the orders for that day's digging.

Bertrand H. Farr—Wyomissing Nurseries Company  
1250 Garfield Avenue, Wyomissing, Penna.